

129.
A
S E R M O N

Occasion'd by the Death of the

Reverend, Pious, and Learned,

Mr. BENJAMIN BENNET,

Late Minister of the Gospel in

NEW-CASTLE upon TYNE,

Who died September 1. 1726.

By J. WORTHINGTON.

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Occasioned by the DEATH of the
Reverend, Pious, and Learned Mr. *Benjamin Bennet*.

Mat. xxiv. 36.

*But of that Day and Hour knoweth no Man, no not
the Angels in Heaven (and Mark adds, (13. 32.)
neither the Son) but the Father only.*

I Am here upon a very solemn and mournful Occasion, to improve the justly lamented Death of that truly great and good Man, your late excellent Pastor: Whose Remove is a sensible and grievous Loss; not only to a private Family; not only to a particular Congregation, but to all the neighbouring Churches; yea, to the whole Church of God, and to the common Interests of Piety and Truth. This sad and surprizing Providence has, I am persuaded, so shock'd and affected you all, that you are well prepar'd to receive the best Impressions, from what I have to offer to your present Meditation; which, considering how sudden and unexpected, as well as awful and severe a Stroke this is, I chuse to ground upon these Words of our blessed Lord: *But of that Day and*
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Hour

Hour knoweth no Man, no not the Angels in Heaven; neither the Son, but the Father only.

Our Saviour, three Days before his Passion, coming out of the Temple with his Disciples, upon their admiring the stately Structure, foretold the utter Ruin and Desolation of it. Whereupon, when they had ascended the Mount of *Olives*, where they had the opportunity of a fuller Prospect, and a further occasion of considering the Fate thereof, predicted by our Lord, they became more inquisitive about the Matter; and therefore (as 'tis probable) imagining that the Destruction of *Jerusalem* and the End of the World would be contemporary Events, they put this Question to him, *When shall these Things be, and what shall be the Sign of thy coming, and of the end of the World?* Ver. 3. Our Saviour, instead of descanting on this false Notion they had imbib'd, returns a direct Answer to their Question; and speaks of the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, from the 4th Verse to the 29th; acquainting them with the Signs and Fore-runners of this approaching Calamity; after which he speaks of the End of the World, and his Appearance to the general Judgment, from the 29th Verse to the 32th; and then he seems to make some Reflections on both these Events. The Text (as I suppose) is a Remark upon the latter of 'em; for tho', after the 31st Verse, our Saviour intersperses many Things, concerning the Destruction of *Jerusalem* and the End of the World, so that 'tis difficult to distinguish what relates to the one and the other; yet it is certain, that he refers to the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, when he says in the 34th Verse, *This Generation shall not pass away till all these Things be fulfilled.* That is, some that are now living

living shall see *Jerusalem* laid waste ; and then it follows in the 36th Verse, *But of that Day and Hour knoweth no Man* ; that is, That other Day I have been discoursing of, when the World shall come to its Period ; as may be collected from the Distinction between *ταῦτα* in the 34th Verse, and *ἐκείνους* in the 36th. Taking it for granted therefore, that my Text is to be understood of the last Great Day, I shall in the handling of it,

First, Take some notice of the Description which our blessed Lord gives us of this Day, in the preceding Verses.

Secondly, I shall enlarge a little upon what we are here told, *viz.* That it is conceal'd from the Knowledge of every Creature when it shall come.

Thirdly, I shall consider the Matter, with a particular View to the Day and Hour of Death ; to which the Text may justly be apply'd. Where I shall shew why it is thus order'd, that we know not this Day and Hour. And then,

Fourthly, Make some suitable Improvement.

I. I shall take a brief View of the Description, which our Saviour gives us of this Day. Then, he tells us, *the Sun shall be darkned, and the Moon shall not give her Light, the Stars shall fall from Heaven, and the Powers of the Heaven be shaken.* Ver. 29. Whether these Words, in a metaphorical Sense, have any relation to the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, I shall not say ; but it is certain they shall be li-

terally fulfill'd, when this other Day comes, which our blessed Saviour speaks of in the Text. *For then the Heavens shall pass away with a great Noise,* 2 Pet. 3. 10. *Rev. 20. 11. And the Elements melt with fervent Heat. And then shall appear the Sign of the Son of Man in Heaven,* ver. the 30th. Which many think is the same with *the Son of Mans coming in the Clouds of Heaven*; for the Jews look'd upon a Cloud as a sacred Sign and Character of the *Messiah's* Appearance. He will appear with *Power*; that is, in the Quality of a Judge, clothed with supreme Authority (*ver. 30.*) and *great Glory*, that Majesty and Glory, which is Essential to him as God, and that Glory which he is crown'd with, as Mediator and Redeemer. He will *send forth his Angels with a great Sound of a Trumpet,* ver. 31. by this signal, proclaiming his coming to judge the World: *And they shall gather his Eleēt from the four Winds, from one End of Heaven unto the other.* The scatter'd Dust of the Saints shall be recollected and re-organiz'd into glorious Bodies; which being done, they shall, by the Ministry of Angels, be gathered from the several Parts of the World before the Judgment Seat of Christ. Then shall the Righteous lift up their Heads with Joy; indeed all the Nations of the Earth shall be assembled before him; when *the Tribes of the Earth shall mourn,* (*Rev. 1. 7.*) or wail because of him; they shall be struck with Horror and Confusion at his Approach. This is the Day our Saviour speaks of; when, *They that are dead in their Graves shall hear the Voice of the Son of God, and come forth,* shall stand before his Tribunal, and undergo their Trial; when the Temper of Men's Hearts, and the Quality

lity of their Actions shall be discus'd, and every Man rewarded according to his Works. But,

II. When this Day and Hour will come is conceal'd from the Knowledge of every Creature. *No Man knows it, no not the Angels in Heaven, but the Father only.*

I. No Man. Our Saviour has elsewhere told us, *That at such a Day and Hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh: We know not in what Hour the Master of the House cometh, whether in the Evening, at Midnight, at Cock crowing, or in the Morning,* Mark 13. 35.

It will be a sudden and unexpected Event, and therefore is compar'd to *the coming of a Thief in the Night*, 2 Pet. 3. 10. And because it will be a very surprizing Day when he appears, we find it compar'd to the Days of *Noah*, when they were Eating, and Drinking, and Marrying, and giving in Marriage, till the Flood came and swept them all away. *So shall the coming of the Son of Man be,* ver. 37, 38. And Luke 21. 35. *It shall come as a Snare upon all them that dwell upon the Face of the Earth.* 'Tis further said,

II. Nor the Angels. Tho' they must minister in the Solemnities of this great Day; tho' they so far exceed us in their Capacities and Manner of knowing, in the Compass and Extent of their Knowledge: Though they are in Heaven standing before the Throne of God, and have opportunities of knowing many Things that are conceal'd from us, yet they know not when this important Day will come. Their Understandings are limited
and

and finite as well as ours ; they can know no more than God has thought fit to communicate unto them : And when this Day and Hour will be, is one of the Things which God has been pleas'd to keep secret from them. I must also remark what another Evangelist adds.

III. Neither the Son himself. For so St. Mark assures us, *chap. 13. ver. 32.* Christ in his superior Nature cannot be ignorant of any Thing. He knows the Hearts of Men. *John 2. 23, 24, 25.* Many believed in his Name when they saw the Miracles which he did ; nevertheless Jesus committed not himself unto them, because he knew all Men, and needed not that any should testify of Man, for he knew what was in Man. His Omniscience is also attested, *John 16. 30.* Now we are sure that thou knowest all Things, and needest not that any Man should ask thee ; by this we believe that thou camest forth from God. And *John 21. 17.* Lord thou knowest all Things, thou knowest that I love thee. So that an infinite unlimited Understanding belongs to Christ, according to the plain Sense of these Expressions. But then as he had a

Dr. Calamy.

double Nature, so he had a double Understanding, the one divine, the other human ; the one infinite, the other finite ; the one omniscient, the other capable of Ignorance. For tho' the Fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily in him, it communicated itself to his human Soul, according to his Pleasure. It is said *he grew in Wisdom* : “ Which (as one expresseth it) “ could not have been, if his

“ human Nature had known all Things,

Tillotson. “ by Virtue of its Union with the Divi-

“ nity ; and therefore when the Know-
“ ledge of all Things is ascrib'd to him, it must be
“ understood of his divine Understanding ; when
“ the

“ the Knowledge of some Things is deny’d of
 “ him, it must be understood of his human Nature.”
 In which lower Nature he speaks of himself, under
 the Character of the Son of Man, *Ver. 37.* of this
 Chapter; and in that parallel Place, *Mark 13. 26.*
 And we may justly suppose he speaks of himself un-
 der this Character, when he says, the Son knows not
 the Day, but the Father only, or God; without in-
 tending to exclude *himself* in regard of his divine
 Nature, whereto the Scripture attributes an unlimited
 Knowledge; or the *Spirit*, concerning whom it is said,
7 Cor. 2. 10. 11. That he searches the deep Things of God,
and knows them as the Spirit of a Man knows the Things
of a Man. These Words therefore, *the Father only*,
 must be understood as oppos’d to every Creature.

But yet, tho’ we know not when this Day or Hour
 will come, we know that many great Things are to
 be transacted before it comes. *Judaism* and *Gentilism*
 must be vanquished and subdued; the Pagan Idolat-
 ers will stoop to the Scepter of Christ, and own him
 for their only Saviour; the *Jews* will submit unto
 his Yoke, acknowledge him the true Messiah, and
 embrace the Laws of Christianity; the Kings and
 Princes of the Earth will conspire against Antichrist,
 and root him of the Face of the Earth: *Christ will*
come with his Fan in his Hand, and thoroughly purge the
Floor of his Church from Error, Idolatry, Supersti-
 tion and Immorality; but yet the Apostle tells us,
2 Thessalonians 2. 3. That Day shall not come till there
be a falling away first. Rev. 20. 7. And then *Satan*,
 who has hitherto been chain’d, shall be let loose
 again, the World shall be corrupted, the Servants
 of Christ persecuted: In which Disorder and Confu-
 sion the general Judgment shall surprize Men *as a*
Thief in the Night. But I proceed:

III. To

III. To consider the Matter with a particular View to the Day and Hour of every Man's Death, and the especial Judgment that follows; to which, what my Text says of the Day and Hour of the general Judgment, may be apply'd. The Propriety and Reasonableness of such an Accommodation of these Words, will appear from two Reflections.

1. At that Day every Person will be fix'd in an unchangeable State of Happiness or Misery. This our Saviour represents to us in the Parable of *Dives and Lazarus*, *Luke 16. 22, 23: And it came to pass that the Beggar dy'd, and was carry'd by Angels into Abraham's Bosom; the Rich Man also dy'd and was buried, and in Hell he lift up his Eyes being in Torment.* Tho' this be a Parable, and every Thing in a Parable is not argumentative, yet the Scope of it is so; and it is plain the Design of this is to shew, what becomes of the Souls of Men, good and bad, immediately after Death. The one are immediately received up into Heaven; the other consign'd over unto a Place and State of irreverfible Misery. So that in this respect, the Day and Hour of Death, as to particular Persons, is the same as if it was the Day of Christ's Appearance to the final Judgment at the End of the World. And then,

2. Of this Day and Hour knoweth no Man, for God dealeth out our Time as he pleases; the Measure of our Days and the Bounds of Life depend entirely upon him; we are wholly at his Disposal, our Breath is in his Hands, and he can stop it whenever he sees fit. And if we attend only to the Course of second Causes, Man's Life hangs upon a weak and brittle Thread, always liable to be snapt asunder, by lurking Diseases within, and a Multitude of Accidents

dents that surround us. So that the Observation of the wise Preacher is daily verified, *Man knoweth not his Time ; as the Fishes are taken in an evil Net, and the Birds caught in a Snare, so are the Sons of Men snar'd in an evil Time, when it cometh suddenly upon them,* Eccles. ix. 12. How true, how evident it is, that the Day of Death is conceal'd from us : Men do not know how long they shall live, or when they shall die. They know indeed that they must die, but the Day and Hour, when, they know not. At such an uncertainty has it pleas'd God to leave us with Respect to the Time of our Lord's coming at Death, as well as at the Day of Judgment. And that for wise Ends and Reasons, some of which I think it very proper to mention here, to Account for this Dispensation, and let you see why God has ordered it so, that of this Day and Hour knoweth no Man. Let it be observ'd then,

1. That hereby he asserts his own Royalty and Prerogative. I may apply to this Purpose that of Christ to his Apostles, *Acts i. 7. It is not for you to know the Times or the Seasons, which the Father has reserved in his own Power.* To declare the Things which are to come, God challenges as his own Peculiar. It's an Act of Sovereignty in him to reveal, or reserve and lock up from us the Knowledge of future Events, as he pleases. And this displays the Majesty and Dignity of his Government, that there are some Things therein, that the Angels themselves know not, nor even the human Soul of our Saviour, but the Father only.

Isa. xli. 26.
xlii. 9. xlii. 9.
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2. It's most congruous to this present State, as it is a State of Probation and Trial, wherein we are under

der Laws prescribing what Duty and Service God expects from us; and as the whole of our Life, (as soon as we come to the Use of Reason and Understanding) should be devoted to, and employ'd in the Work which God has given us to do; and as he will call us to an Account, and Reward or punish us according to what we have done in the Body, God has wisely conceal'd from us the Time when this probationary State will conclude, that we may have no Temptation to squander away any of our Time unprofitably, or loiter and trifle in any Branch of our Work. Our being left to an uncertainty in this Case is a standing Motive to holy Diligence in every Part of our Duty, to be always intent in preparing and making ready for the solemn Judgment, which will shut up the State of Trial.

3. Great Inconveniencies would attend the Knowledge of this Day and Hour; for if Men did know that this Day and Hour was certainly near, this would overwhelm many with such a Concern and Dread, as would put an Arrest upon all their Affairs, as to this present Life. If those, whose Lives are a publick Blessing to the World, did know that their Time of Leaving it was at Hand, they would quit their Posts, retire into Solitude, and spend the Remainder of their Days in Devotion, to the neglect of their Duties they owe their Country, their Families and Posterity. And thus many ill Effects would follow, many necessary, noble, and generous Designs would be dropt, many important Services, many useful Improvements stopt and interrupted, which wou'd be an unsupportable Mischief to human Society: Whereas not knowing but they may live some Time longer, they are encouraged to go forwards in their respective Places and Stations, attending

tending their Duty, and being serviceable to the World. *Besides*, That Religion, which is the Effect of such violent Impressions, wou'd look more like Necessity and Force, then Choice and Inclination; an Effect of servile Fear than of an ingenious and dutiful Disposition, and so wou'd be no certain Argument of true Piety; at least Religion wou'd not appear so freely chosen, and have that Excellency in it, if Persons acted always under the Terror and Apprehension of an immediate Death.

And on the other Hand, if Men did know that this Day and Hour was afar off, that the Period of their Lives was very remote, this wou'd be a dangerous Snare, and have an unhappy Influence on most Men. How hard a Matter is it to perswade them to be serious, tho' they know not that there is a Day or Hour between them and Eternity? What wou'd they be then were they assur'd of continuing a long while in the World? What's the Reason that Persons procrastinate the Work of Religion, why Security and Forgetfulness of another World prevails so much among the Children of Men, but because they put this Day and Hour far from them? And therefore, if Persons did know that this Day was certainly far off, the Snare would hold them the faster, the Temptation wou'd be stronger, and lull them asleep more securely. The great Arguments of Religion, taken from the World to come, wou'd have less Power and Influence upon the Minds of Men. But since they know not when this Day and Hour will be, it's a constant Argument why we should be always waiting, and always ready. So that 'tis certainly a wise Method of Providence to keep us Ignorant as to this Particular. Which brings me to the chiefest Thing of all, and that is,

IV. To shew what Use we shou'd make of this solemn Consideration. And here I cannot do better than recommend to you the Improvement which our blessed Saviour himself makes of this Doctrine. *Watch therefore*, Ver. 42. *Be ye ready*, Ver. 44. And *Mark xiii. 33. Take ye heed, Watch and Pray.* Which Admonitions Imply these two Things,

1. That we should live in a continual Expectation of this Day and Hour, maintaining upon our Minds a constant Sense of our Mortality, looking upon our Lives as absolutely uncertain, and always liable to the Stroke of Death ; waiting till our Change comes, expecting daily when Death will give us a Summons to appear before the Bar of the supream Judge, not promising our selves so much as the Respite of one Day, because we can't be sure of it.

2. Our Saviour's Exhortations imply a continual Application to the Means and Methods of Preparation for this Day, and Hour. Which are such as these,

1. We must take heed to be renew'd and sanctify'd. If Death finds us out of this State, it will leave us seal'd up under eternal Condemnation. And this Life is the only Time allowed us to get our Natures chang'd, those holy Dispositions form'd in us, which are absolutely necessary to make us meet for Heaven. Shou'd Death overtake us before this be done, it will transmit us into an Estate of eternal Misery. Therefore, examine and pass an impartial Judgment upon the Condition of your Souls, before the Judge comes to do it. Enquire whose Image and Supercription you bear ; whether the prevailing

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John iii 5.
Rom. xxi. 27.

Bent and Biass of your Natures be alter'd, and have an habitual Direction to God and Religion.

This is the Prime and fundamental Part of a Christian's Readiness; if this be wanting the Judge will condemn you as Self-destroying Sinners, who might have been renew'd and heal'd, but would not; as having neglected the Prescriptions of the Gospel, resisted the compassionate Attempts of the Spirit, to recover you from a State of Sin, and wou'd not mind the Things which belong to your Peace. Again,

2. Because we are but sanctify'd in Part, we shou'd be watchful against Sin for the future. There are Sins of Weakness and Infirmary, which as long as we mourn over them, and endeavour to outgrow them, are consistent with the Favour of God, a regular Peace of Conscience, and a well grounded Hope of Happiness after Death: Or else who cou'd be sav'd? But presumptuous Sins, which are deliberate and chosen, committed against the Dictates of Judgment and Conscience, as these are direct Insults upon God's Authority, so while a Person continues impenitent under the Guilt thereof, the Aspect of Death must needs be fearful. And tho' they be retracted by a sincere Repentance, yet as they are seldom expung'd out of the Records of Conscience, they occasion many bitter Reflections, and some times are as walking Ghosts to Men in their dying Hours, raising a great many Fears and Jealousies, which make Death, tho' safe, very uncomfortable. Watchfulness is necessary that we be not thus overtaken; for we are daily compass'd with Snares and Temptations, and have corrupt Natures within us, which make them more dangerous and fatal; the Objects about us, our Company, Society, Callings, and

and Circumstances, may prove unhappy Occasions of Sin unto us ; and therefore, there is need of a continual Guard upon our selves. Further,

We must watch that the World do not insinuate too much into our Hearts and Affections. The best of Men, whilst under easie and prosperous Circumstances, while they have every Thing according to their Desire, are apt to grow too fond of this World, to cling too close to it, and to say in their Hearts it is good to be here ; tho' they are desirous to go to Heaven at the last, they are not hasty as to the Time, are still for a further Respite, to be spared a little longer before they go hence, and are seen no more : Whilst it is thus with Persons, they are unready for Death, will be unwilling and afraid to die. The Thoughts of it will never sit easie upon us till we be in some Measure crucify'd to the World, dead to the Pleasures and Entertainments thereof, and therefore we should be daily endeavouring to compose our Minds to a greater Indifferency to them. Hence the Apostles Exhortation, *1 Cor. vii. 29. Let them that have Wives be as tho' they had none, they that weep as tho' they wept not, they that rejoice as if they rejoiced not ; they that use this World, as not abusing it, because the Fashion of this World passeth away.* It's but a short Scene which will be quickly shifted, and succeeded with an eternal State of Things, and therefore says the same Apostle elsewhere, *Phil. iv. 5. Let your Moderation be known unto all Men, the Lord is at Hand.* Where by Moderation, we may understand Sobriety in the Use and Enjoyment of the Things of this World. The Consideration of our Master's Approach, and the Time of our Account drawing nigh, shou'd make us moderate in our Inclinations, and Regards unto, in our Cares
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and Concerns about this World. Shou'd we engage our Affections too eagerly upon it, this will put a Sting and Bitterness into Death, when it comes to separate us from it, and cause a Reluctancy in our Hearts at the Thoughts of it. Or by this Moderation which the Apostle recommends, we may understand Sobriety, in Opposition to Intemperance and Sensuality, which is a necessary Branch of our Readiness for this Day and Hour. What a dreadful Surprize was it to the old World, when the Flood came and swept them all away, while they were drenching themselves in Luxury and Voluptuousness? Our Saviour in the 48 ver. of this Chapter intimates, that this will be the Case of many at his Appearance, who will say in their Hearts, *The Lord delayeth his coming*; and will embolden themselves to eat and drink with the Drunken. But observe, what he says concerning such, in the 50 ver. *The Lord of that Servant will come in a Day which he thinks not of, and in an Hour of which he is not aware, and will cut him asunder, and appoint him his Portion with Hypocrites, where there shall be nothing but weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of Teeth.* Surely then when there is such an awful Day before us, and the Time of its coming so uncertain; and since Voluptuousness and Flesh pleasing are such a dreadful Posture for Christ to find us in, this should effectually restrain us from all criminal Indulgences to the Flesh. And then,

4. We must watch, and take heed to improve all our Talents wisely and faithfully: Our Saviour, *Matth. xxv.* represents all those Powers, Abilities, and Capacities, which God has endow'd us, with, as so many particular Trusts committed to us of which we must give an Account. To those, that employ them well, to the great Purposes of God's Honour, the

the Interest of Religion, and the Good of others ; He will say, *Well done good and faithful Servants, enter into your Master's Joy.* But on the other Hand, if Persons have been entrusted with Wealth and Riches, and have not been faithful Stewards in the Distribution thereof, for the refreshing the Bowels of the Poor, especially his poor Servants and Members ; if Persons have had spiritual Gifts and Abilities, and have not employed them some Way or other in the Service of God, for the Edification of others ; if Time, their precious Talent has been wasted, and squandred away in Idleness and Vanity ; if that Time which is appropriated to the Worship and Service of God, be prostituted to common and prophane Uses ; if the Gospel, the Ordinances and Institutions thereof, be not improv'd for the Furtherance of our Salvation ; if we have not made a good Use of Opportunities of receiving Good our selves, and doing Good to others, we shall be found in the Number of unprofitable Servants, that have not improv'd their Lord's Talents : And you see the Doom that will be pronounced upon such, *Matth. xxv. 27. Bind him Hand and Foot, and cast him into utter Darkness.* In the next Place,

5. Diligently attend upon, and converse much with God in all religious Duties : This is another Means highly conducive to our Readiness for this Day and Hour ; it is a Means of conquering our Aversion to Death, and of making us willing to die. For when a Christian's Thoughts, and Affections are herein closely exercis'd upon God, and he's rais'd to any lively Acts of Faith and Love, his Spirit inflam'd with holy Fervency ; he has those secret reviving Testimonies of the Approbation of Heaven, those inward Sensations of the Love of God, which are
so

so full of Refreshment and Comfort, as to cause this World to vanish out of Sight ; or however, every Thing in it to appear comparatively mean and inconsiderable, and give him such delightful, ravishing Ideas of Communion with God in Heaven, as to make him willing, nay desirous to be absent from the Body, that he may be present with the Lord.

The maintaining of frequent Intercourse with God in divine Exercises, is also a Means of improving in Holiness, and consequently of fitting us to appear before him in the other World. This is the End of all religious Duties, particularly of hearing, and reading the Word, *1 Pet. ii. 2. As new born Babes, desire the sincere Milk of the Word that ye may grow thereby.* And *1 Tim. iv. 6. We are nourisht up by the Words of Faith and sound Doctrine.* The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, is a spiritual and restorative Repast, to repair our Decays, to revive, and re-invigorate holy and heavenly Dispositions in us. And the End of the Gospel Ministry, the Apostle tells us, *Eph. iv. 12. is the Edifying the Body of Christ, and perfecting the Saints.* The same is true of all the Duties of Religion, they are Means which if rightly us'd, will thro' the Blessing of God, conduce to our Growth and Progress in every Christian Grace and Virtue, and consequently make us more ready for Death, and more meet for Heaven. For Holiness is not only necessary to make us capable of entering into Heaven, but 'tis the Inchoation thereof, the Dawning of the eternal Day of Happiness ; and according to our Proficiency therein, we ripen for that celestial State of Life.

But under this Head of Religious Duties, let me

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particularly recommend to you Prayer, and Self-Examination.

I. Be instant in Prayer. Our Lord himself gives you this Advice, *Luke xxi. 36. Pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these Things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.* In which Words, he tells us, what we should do that we may be accounted worthy to escape those dreadful Things which shall befall the wicked in the Day of general Judgment; for to this, our Saviour has a Respect there, as well as to the Destruction of the wicked *Jews*, the Type and Shadow of it. That ye may stand before the Son of Man, that is, acquitted and absolv'd: That ye may stand at his right Hand among those happy ones, to whom he will say, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you before the Foundation of the World:* That ye may be accounted worthy of this thro' the Grace and Mercy of God in Christ Jesus. Prayer is of singular Use in our Preparations for this Day, as it is a Means of obtaining Assistance from God in every Duty, Grace to help us in every Time of Need; and also a Means of maintaining a religious Warmth in our Minds, keeping up a Spirit of Piety and Devotion there, the Flame whereof wou'd be soon extinguish'd, without the Breathings of Prayer to fan it, and keep it in Motion. It is especially a Means of cherishing Life and Warmth in a Christian's Hope and Love. The Experiences which he has of his Acceptance in the Returns of Prayer, inflame his Love to God, *I will love the Lord*, says the Psalmist, *who has heard the Voice of my Supplication.* And this animates his Hope and Confidence, that he shall obtain Mercy of the Lord, and find Favour in his

his Sight, when he stands before his Throne of Judgment.

2. I would recommend to you Self-Examination. Conscience is plac'd in our Bosoms as a vigilant Inspector, and domestick Judge to observe our Ways, and accordingly to censure or approve them; in which Work, we shou'd be often employ'd. And it would be of great Use in order to the settling of our Accounts with Heaven, and keeping them in some Measure streight and even, if at the Conclusion of every Day we wou'd Review our Conduct therein, and wherein we have neglected or fail'd in our Duty, have been overtaken with Sin, would reflect upon it with Shame and Sorrow, and a bitter Repentance, and apply our selves to God for Pardon, for the Sake of the attoning Blood of Christ, that so no Items of uncanceled Guilt might be found in the Records of Conscience, no Debts to divine Justice uncross'd and undischarg'd. In the Use of these, and such like Methods,

6. Be daily endeavouring to clear up your Title to Heaven. When this is once done, it will dispel the Fears of Death, disarm it of its Terrors, prepare you to die not only with Peace, but Joy; and to enter into the eternal World with the Triumphs of Faith and Hope. Now the Scripture directs us, how we may obtain a well grounded Satisfaction as to our Right to Heaven. In order to a full Assurance of Hope, *Heb. vi. 11.* we must be faithful and diligent in every Part of our Duty. And a full Assurance of Faith, *Heb. x. 22.* i. e. A firm Perswasion of our Interest in the Favour and Love of God, and in the Promises of his Covenant, must be founded upon a Sense of having our Hearts sprinkled

led from an evil Conscience: We must make such Improvements in Religion, get our Hearts and Lives reduc'd to such a Degree of Conformity to the Gospel Standard, that upon our comparing our selves therewith, we may without Flattery or Presumption conclude our Sincerity and Uprightness. And herein we stand in Need of the Assistance of the divine Spirit; a full Assurance of Faith, and Hope, arising from his witnessing with our Spirits, *That we are the Children of God.* By which, I suppose the Apostle, *Rom. viii. 16.* understands not only the Fruits of the Spirit in Believers, which are a standing permanent Testimony within them, that they are the Sons of God, or the Medium or Agreement from whence they conclude this: But a certain gracious Agency of the Spirit enabling them to perceive, and discern the Fruits of his Grace in them; and to draw this Conclusion thence, that they are the Children of God, and Heirs of Heaven. And therefore, when we are endeavouring by Self-Reflection and Examination, to prove our Title to the heavenly Inheritance, we should pray to God to enlighten and direct us herein by his Spirit. Once more,

7. We must fix our Hopes on the Mercy of God thro' Christ for Acceptance on this Day. It is the Redeemers Merit and Righteousness, that must atone for our Guilt; be our Apology and Defence against all Accusation and Charges: This must found our Claim and Title to Heaven, *looking, as St. Jude expresseth it, For the Mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ to eternal Life, (Jude xxi.)* expecting it as the Purchase of his meritorious Death, and not as the Acquisition of any Works or Services of our own; which have no further Influence

ence upon our obtaining it, than as they are Declarative of our Right and Title to it, by virtue of God's gracious Promises in the Gospel, for the Sake of his beloved Son, who has fullfil'd all Righteousness for us : They must be very ignorant of God, and of themselves, who can think of standing before him in the Judgment on any other Bottom. Thus I have directed you to the proper Means and Methods of Preparation for this Day and Hour, I shall now offer some Arguments to perswade you to be always preparing and making ready for it.

1. Consider 'tis a Day that will certainly come. As to the Day and Hour of Death, the Matter is out of Question. The living know that they must die. And as it Respects the Judgment that follows, the Scripture is express and full ; and uot only so, but even Reason itself assures us of it by Arguments taken from the Justice of God, the Oeconomy of Providence in the present Distribution of Things, and the Presages thereof in the Minds of the Heathens themselves. The Apostle tells us, their Consciences witness'd against them for sinning against their natural Light. *Rom. ii. 15.* Which supposes, that they had some secret Hints, some obscure Notions of a Judgment and a Wrath to come : And therefore since this Day will certainly come, it is of the highest Concernment to us to be prepared for it. Especially if we consider,

2. The Importance of the Day. It is a decisive Day, in which our State will be irrevocably determin'd ; It will be in vain to cry, Lord ! Lord ! open unto us, when the Door is already shut ; and the Door of Hope is shut upon unprepar'd Sinners as soon as they enter the Gates of Death. This shuts up our
Season

Season of preparing and doing any Thing for Eternity, the Night is then come wherein no Man can work. As to the Concerns of this Life, if we have by our Imprudence brought our selves into Straits and Difficulties, it is possible we may correct our Miscarriages, and redeem our selves from such Inconveniences: But when this Day is come, there will be no rectifying any past Errors or Mistakes, our State will then be fixt and immutable for ever: Death in the same State and Condition in which it finds us, will consign us over to Judgment, and Judgment to Happiness or Misery, and both unalterable. Can therefore any Thing in the World be so momentous and important to us, as the Issues of this deciding Day? What Caution then becomes us in our Inquiries into the Goodness and Safety of our Condition, the Reason and Foundation of the Hope that is in us, and the settling the Affairs of our Souls, since a Mistake herein will be eternally Fatal. Let me inculcate it again,

3. We know not when this Day and Hour will come, and therefore we should be always ready; it may come whilst we are slumbering and sleeping, when we are least apprehensive of the Nearness of it; the next Day or Hour for any Thing we know. And therefore,

1. This is a loud Warning to careless trifling Sinners, not to delay any longer their Preparations for this Day. Consider, Sinners, you cannot be sure of one Moment beyond the present Time, 'tis not in your own Hands, 'tis perfectly at God's Disposal, who can when he pleases put a Period to it; cause your Breath to cease from your Nostrils, whilst you are flattering your selves with foolish Hopes that you

you have many Years before you ; perhaps in the Height of this vain Imagination the Command may come forth, and Death receives it's Commission to summon you out of the World : When the rich Man was bidding his Soul take it's Ease, it was said unto him, *Thou Fool, this Night thy Soul shall be requir'd from thee.* You know not but that this may be the Evening of your Day of Trial, and that your eternal State may be just commencing, therefore Delays must be unspeakably dangerous ; and 'tis no less than desperate Madnes for any one to venture his Soul upon such an absolute uncertainty as future Time ; consider how inexpressibly Dismal will be the Case of unprepared, unprovided Souls ; *If Reason and Conscience be awake* when Death comes, with what Horror will they look back upon their past Sins, and Forward unto their approaching Account ? What Confusion will they be under ? What Storms and Tempests will be rais'd within them, to think that now for the Sake of Dreams, and Shadows, petty trifling Interests and Pleasures they must be ruin'd and undone for ever, and that they have nothing before them now but a Place of Misery from whence there is no Redemption ? Or suppose *Conscience be stupify'd and fear'd*, so that they are hurried out of the World in a profound Security, how will they be blank'd and amazed, when they find themselves in the midst of Flames, enter'd upon an unalterable Scene of Woe and Misery before they ever bethought themselves ? Into what Agonies of Soul will they fall, under such a Surprise ?

2. This calls upon all of us to take heed that we don't intermit our Care, or grow Remiss in our Preparations for this Day ; to be always upon our guard, and watch against any Fits of Drowsiness and Inadvertency,

Inadvertency, least this Day over take us under the Disadvantages of spiritual Deadness, Carelessness, and Security, an uncomfortable Posture for Death to find us in: Let us always attend with the utmost Diligence and Circumspection to the Concern of our Souls with the eternal World, be often engag'd in dying Work, renewing our Repentance and Covenant with God, and committing our selves to his Disposal.

Indeed whilst we are in these Bodies of Flesh, we have the Business of this World upon our Hands, are surrounded with so many Diversions and Amusements: And especially whilst there are Remains of Sin in us, it is very difficult to keep our selves in a waiting, watching Posture. But the Difficulty shou'd only serve to increase our Care and Diligence, to prevent an uncomfortable Surprize when ever this Day and Hour shall come. And as another Inducement hereto I add in the last Place,

4. Consider the Comfort and Happiness of being prepar'd and ready at the Appearance of this Day and Hour; with what Safety, Joy and Pleasure may one that is so, meet and attend his Lord when he comes, receive the Sentence of Death and triumph over it, without any of those dismal foreboding Apprehensions, that are such a dreadful *Sting* to others in those Circumstances; how calm, sedate and easie may he be in his last Minutes, with how compos'd and chearful a Mind may he take Leave of the present World, of all his dear Relations, Friends, and Affairs below, commit his Body to the Grave, to sleep there till the Resurrection of the Just, and recommend his Soul into the Hands of a faithful Saviour, fully expecting, and earnestly longing to be soon,
and

and for ever with his Lord, in the happy, glorious World above. Oh the comfortable State of that Christian at the Day and Hour of Death, who in the Course of his past Life, wisely and decently employ'd himself in making all necessary and suitable Preparation for it! *Blessed is that Servant whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing*, Matth. xxiv. 46. Which Words all that now hear them, will naturally apply to your truly excellent and lately deceas'd Pastor, the Reverend Mr. Bennet, whose Death has given occasion for this Discourse, and to whose dear Memory, I can't conclude without paying some Regard; tho' I am certain I shall omit many valuable Parts of his Character, and therefore wou'd not be understood to attempt a full and perfect Account of him; yet something I wou'd say, to convey a faint Idea of so great and good a Man, to those who did not know him, and to refresh it in those that did.

As I had no Acquaintance with him in the former Part of his Life, nor have at present an opportunity of informing my self particularly about it; all I can say of him then is, that he was born at *Willsborough* near *Market Bosworth* in *Leicestershire*, where a dangerous Illness he had while young, contributed to make the most serious Impressions on him, and begun that good Work in him, which was afterwards so happily cultivated and improv'd. The remarkable Discoveries of his early Piety and Zeal, are remember'd there; and spoken of with Pleasure and Admiration by many to this Day: One Instance whereof I have been told, which I think worth Recording. He made it his Business to awaken in other young Persons in the Neighbourhood, a serious Concern for their

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Souls, and another World; wherein he so far succeeded, that he prevail'd in several to join with him often in solemn Acts of Devotion, for which Purpose they us'd often to meet in convenient Retirements. When it was Time for him to think of some Employment, he shew'd a Mind intent on higher Matters than those of Trade, for which he was at first design'd; and encourag'd to pursue his Inclinations, he apply'd himself to study with such uncommon Diligence and Success, that in a short Time *his profiting appear'd to all.* He made quick and great Proficiency in all the Parts of Learning subservient to the sacred Office he had in View, so that when he enter'd on the solemn Work, he was qualified for it beyond many, and always *approv'd himself a Workman that needed not be asham'd, rightly dividing the Word of Truth,* 2. Tim. ii. 15.

He first exercis'd his Ministry at *Temple-Hall* which adjoins to the Place of his Birth, upon the late worthy Mr. *John Sheffield's* remove to *London*; and for some Time he minister'd with great Acceptance there to a very serious People, till Providence, intending him for a higher Sphere, and more publick Service, call'd him to *Newcastle*, where he succeeded that very valuable Person Dr. *Gilpin*, and continued to be eminently useful to his Death.

But as I design not an Historical Account of his Life, only something of his Character, I proceed to draw this according as the several Parts occur to my Thoughts.

His Person was of the larger Size, but graceful and agreeable; he had a very comely Aspect,
and

and recommending Countenance. His Behaviour was always decently grave, yet upon proper Occasions innocently pleasant. His Temper was sedate and serene, tender, compassionate and universally Benevolent. - And as to the Endowments and Qualities of his Mind, all that knew him will readily acknowledge they were far Superiour to those of most. He had great natural Abilities, a quick Apprehension, ready Wit, solid Judgment, a happy Memory, undaunted Resolution, and a free commanding Elocution. His Thoughts were clear, strong and penetrating. He had an excellent Talent at managing an Argument, displaying and urging it in it's utmost Force and Strength, and to the greatest Advantage: He reason'd and discours'd upon any Subject he took in Hand, as one that had div'd deep into it; well digested and methodiz'd his Thoughts about it. In a Word, taking him in all Respects I hardly ever knew his equal.

Consider him as a Scholar, and he had acquir'd a vast Treasure of useful Learning both human and divine. He was singularly acquainted with ancient and modern Books, and had a good Collection of them, which he did not make for Shew but Use; for he was a very close indefatigable Student, spent all the Time he cou'd redeem for that Purpose in diligent Application, nor cou'd he without Concern see any Thing that look'd like trifling in others. It appears from his Diary, that notwithstanding his numerous Avocations in the publick Post he fill'd, he constantly devoted *fifty*, some times *sixty* Hours a Week to hard study, which he distributed among the six Days as best suited his other Occasions.

Consider him as a Christian, and his Excellences were extraordinary and conspicuous to every Observer. Few answer'd the glorious Character better, and adorn'd it more. He had a true and deep Sense of Religion upon his Mind, was habitually serious and devout, and went far into the secret and retired Parts of the religious Life. I have Reason to say, his *Christian Oration*, wherein you may observe much of the noble Breathings of a pious Soul winging for Heaven, was only a transcript of his own, and the Rules there laid down were copied from his Practice. Witness his own Diary, which, tho' wrote in a Character chiefly of his own inventing, yet it is so far to be understood as serves to shew his eminent and very exemplary Piety and Devotion. Several Things might be transcrib'd thence, peculiarly instructing and affecting; but I shall only take Notice that his Course was, the first Thing he did in the Morning, to spend an Hour in secret Converse with God and his own Soul, in reading the Scriptures, Meditation and Prayer. And at Night he did the same, adding then a Review of the Day, and a strict Account how he had employ'd every Hour of it: To which he commonly subjoin'd some serious and suitable Reflections as occasion requir'd, humbling himself, adoring the Goodness and Grace of God, renewing and confirming his sacred Purposes and Resolutions, exciting himself to a greater Usefulness, imploring the divine Conduct, Direction and Help, and owning any special Assistance receiv'd, &c. It was his Custom too if at Home to retire before or after Dinner for a short Prayer, and if Abroad, he sent up an ejaculatory one. Such as this was his constant Practice; no wonder then if he made great Progress

Progress in the divine Life, and acquir'd a Temper of Mind, holy and heavenly in a high Degree.

Nor were his social Vertues less considerable. I shall not stand to speak of him as a tender affectionate Relation, a kind and faithful Friend, but only mention his remarkable Charity and Zeal to do good. He seem'd to have no other Regard to this World, than as a Sphere of Usefulness; and therefore, was always contriving and endeavouring to be serviceable, which indeed he always eminently was, either to the publick, or particular Persons; his Prudence, Courage and Zeal, wonderfully qualifying him for it. How generous and charitable he was, many that were reliev'd by him at his own great Expence can witness: How hospitable to all, I need not tell, and how Catholick his Principles were, is known to every one that knew any Thing of him. His Love was not confin'd to any Set or Party of Christians. He regarded the Appearances of sincere Religion, more than any distinguishing Names and Characters; and exceedingly valued a good Man, and a Man of Integrity, what Denomination soever he pass'd under. Consider him as a Minister; and it will be allow'd by all, that his Qualifications for that holy Office, and his Management of it were much above the common Rate. They, who enjoy'd the Benefit of his Labours statedly or occasionally, knew very well how he excell'd in all the Parts of the sacred Work; and they were Strangers to him indeed, who did not know *he was an accomplish'd Divine, a richly furnish'd and well instructed Scribe*, of whom it deserves to be said, as well as of most of the Age, that he was *an able Minister of the New Testament*.

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He was excellent in Prayer, both in the Church and in his Family ; always wonderously pertinent, copious and fervent ; his Heart evidently dictated his Expressions ; he power'd out his Soul in the Duty, and some times seem'd to be in a perfect Rapture ; so that some of his Brethren have declar'd they have gone away from hearing him deeply asham'd, and deeply affected.

He was an incomparable Preacher. His Discourses from the Pulpit were always very judicious, and very moving ; wherein he at once inform'd the Judgment, and aptly apply'd himself to the Affections of his Auditors. improv'd the Mind, and impress'd the Heart. He was happy in the Choice of his Subjects, which us'd to be the greatest and most important in the Christian Religion, and such as had a direct Tendency to subserve the glorious Designs of it. And his Manner of handling them was rational clear and lively, he cultivated and improv'd almost every Thing he consider'd, and seldom preach'd what wou'd not well bear the Press. His Matter was solid and weighty and, had commonly something new in it ; his Method accurate and natural ; his Stile exceeding free and smooth, polite, strong and sprightly ; and his Delivery graceful and solemn ; and indeed his whole Deportment in the Pulpit, was attended with a Solemnity peculiar to himself, that cou'd not but awe and affect his Hearers.

And thus finely qualify'd for Preaching he was assiduous in that Work, and took great Delight therein ; was ready to preach in Season, and out of Season, as not only his own People, but all the adjacent Congregations knew. Here I beg leave to mention

tion a Passage he sometimes told, and said, he often thought of. Being one Time solicited to preach in London, Mr. *Timothy Rogers* who was in Company, broke out into some such Expressions ; as that, *Ob preacch, by all means preach, I wou'd fain preach bnt cannot ; and what do you know but you may do some Good, which you may never hear of till the Day of Judgment.*

With what Affection and Enlargement was he wont to dispence the sacred Mysteries, — I mean the Sacraments of the Christian Religion, particularly that of the Lord's Supper every Month. He took great Pains with himself to work up his own Heart to a suitable serious Frame, which appear'd in the Manner of his Administration, that was always very solemn, warm and lively. He some times takes Notice in his Diary, with Expressions of the greatest Thankfulness, how much he had been assisted therein, and others generally took Notice of it. Many admir'd him exceedingly upon such Occasions, and thought he even excell'd himself.

I must not omit to take Notice of another Qualification, observable in this excellent Person as a Minister ; I mean his Prudence, and Conduct, his Tenderness, and Resolution in the Exercise of Discipline and Government. As he ruled well his own House, he knew how to rule the Church of God, and behave himself wisely in it. Many remember with affectionate Respect, how admirable and moving, how wise, faithful, and exemplary his Management was, in Instances to this Purpose.

Nor

Nor shou'd it be forgotten, that besides his stated Ministerial Services, he very frequently observ'd Days of Fasting and Prayer.. I might have hinted from his Diary, that he often kept such in secret, but I refer here to those he solemniz'd some times more privately in his own House with the Members of his Church, and some times more publickly in the Congregation; and 'tis well known how often he mov'd for the keeping of such Days, by other Ministers and their People.

The naming other Ministers and their People, reminds me how much he was, one Time and one Way or other, concern'd for almost all the Churches in these Northern Parts of *England*, and how very naturally he cared for their State. He was usually apply'd to in their Exigencies, and readily assisted them, not only with the best and most faithful Advice, but otherwise as their Occasions wanted. It cannot be wonder'd at then, if he some times undertook an ungrateful Office, nor if his Services were not always so well receiv'd, as they deserv'd to have been: But it has been observ'd very justly, that they who took Measures contrary to those which he approv'd, commonly saw Reason to acknowledge their Mistake.

As to his more extensive Usefullness by the Writings which he has publish'd, I shall say little, being satisfy'd they speak his Praise, and their own sufficiently. He has given therein a Taste of his Excellencies as a Christian, a Scholar, a Minister, a Protestant, and a Britton. How much more, and greater Things might have been expected from him, if God had been pleas'd to spare his valuable Life,
and

and not to have depriv'd us of him, when most (a) ripe for eminent Service? However, as it is, I hope some of his Remains will see the Light, which I don't question will appear not unworthy of him, tho' they must want his finishing Hand, and some of the Beauties that he wou'd have given them.

I shall not dwell long upon the Circumstances of his Death, tho' several Things worth mentioning occur'd in his short Illness. But I cannot forbear observing, that he set a remarkable Example of happy dying, as well as of holy living. Nothing deserves to be more admir'd and coveted, than the compos'd easie chearful Frame, with which he met his Diffolution. When the cruel (b) Distemper first seiz'd him, it was with so much violence, as to leave but little Room to look for his Recovery, and he profess'd with an Air of great Satisfaction, that he was at the same Time seiz'd with the Hopes of having got his Discharge, as he exprest it. Death, (said he) is no more to me than it is for a weary Traveller after a hard Day's Journey, to undress and go to Bed. Some Considerations, I confess might plead for my Stay in the World a while, but they cannot prevail with me to desire to live; I only desire, if Providence seems fit to continue me, that I may submit. At another Time, he declar'd he had not one uneasy Thought about himself: Death is no awful Thing to me, (said he) but will be a happy Remove to the Church above, where I have long been desirous to be. He told his own Son-in-Law, who attended him as Physician, and desir'd Leave

(a) He was about 52 when he died. (b) A Fever.

to call in other Assistance, that he was willing he shou'd use what Means he apprehended necessary; but then added, Doctor, I shall pray against you. Many other such Expressions are remember'd, but I shall only take Notice here, that he design'd to have left behind him a solemn Testimony to the great Truths of the Christian Religion, but found himself unable to dictate what he had a Mind to say; he was so ineebled, and his Spirits so weaken'd by the Severity of his Disease; of which it may be easie to conceive, since it attack'd him on *Saturday*, and carried him off early on *Thursday* Morning after. But in this it was favourable to him, that he was perfectly sensible to the last, and then died, not only with Peace and Comfort in his own Mind, but almost without a Struggle or a Groan.

Thus this burning and shining Light, I don't say was extinguish'd, but disappear'd and was taken up to shine in a higher brighter Orb. Thus this good and faithful Servant was dismiss'd from his Work below, and transplanted to be employ'd in the nobler Services of the Heavenly Temple, leaving us to mourn and lament our Loss.

And a Loss it is, a publick and general Loss. There are not many like minded: The World has one great and good Man less than it had; Piety and Religion, one hearty active Friend, and Wellwisher fewer.

'Tis a Loss more especially to his Brethren in the Ministry, whose Number is not only lessen'd, but their Hands very much weakned by his Remove, having lost one that was not only an eminent Fellow

low-Worker with them, but an Ornament to his Order.

Above all, his mournful Relations have sustained a most heavy Loss, but let it alleviate their Grief, to think how unspeakably it is his Gain ; he is only gone to receive his Crown, to reap the glorious Fruits of his pious useful Life. *Wherefore comfort your selves, and one another with these Things ;* and since nothing here below can fully Repair, and make up the Loss to you, have Recourse to that God who can do it effectually, and support you under it.

And I add, 'tis a grievous Loss to this Church, which was his Pastoral Charge. I am sensible what a Stroke you have receiv'd, and must remind you, that his excellent Ministry which you have enjoy'd so long, was a precious Talent put into your Hands, for which you must Account. The Pains he has taken among you will be a swift Witness against you, if the great Ends of a Gospel Ministry be not obtain'd upon you. But I cannot doubt there are here many Seals of his. On which Account, as well as on many others, I hope it will never be forgot while this Generation lasts, that there was such a Man as the Reverend Mr. Bennet at Newcastle. Remember how holily and unblamably he behav'd himself among you, and *be ye Followers of him, who now through Faith and Patience is inheriting the Promises.* He is gone, and you must see his Face, must hear his Voice no more in this Assembly, but yet tho' he's dead, he still speaks ; speaks particular to you in his *Christian Oratory*, which I wou'd recommend unto you all. Read

it,

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is and converse much with it, with a View to form your own Practice, and it will lead you unto an Acquaintance with vital Christianity, and the Pleasures of it.

You have now a critical Case before you, which cannot be happily manag'd without great Wisdom and Prudence. Your Concern will be to get this sad Breach made up, and hard I'm afraid you'll find it, to settle so agreeably. But wait on God in the Use of proper Means, and earnestly beg of him in some competent Measure to fill the Pulpit again, pray that he wou'd direct you to take due Steps in that weighty Matter. Importunately intreat the great Shepherd of his Sheep, to hear, Pity, and Supply you ; and in the mean while keep close to God and Duty, and to one another in Love and Unity. I earnestly exhort you, to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace, divide not in so great an Affair as lieth before you, and then you may hope, that God will in due Time give you another Minister, who shall carry on his Work among you. Only do you pray for the Remnant that is left, that since our Fathers and Brethren are taken (a) fast up, their Mantles may be left behind, their Piety, Zeal, and Ministerial Qualifications may be transmitted to Survivors. And in our Turn, we earnestly desire and Pray, that you may be under the divine Care and Conduct, that tho' God is emp-

(a) In the Space of three Years, several Ministers have died in the Neighbourhood of *Newcastle*, and in it ; as Mr. *Turnbull* of *North Shields*, Mr. *Stiry* of *Greenside*, Mr. *Wilson* of *Sunderland*, Mr. *Stodhart* Senior at *Newcastle*, Mr. *Stodhart* Junior at *South Shields*, and now Mr. *Bennet*.

tying it from one Vessel to another, you may still enjoy the precious Treasure which is always the same. I heartily commend you, my Brethren to God, and the Word of his Grace, that is able to build you up. The Lord direct you in your Choice, and settle you again under a Pastor after his own Heart, that this Church may still flourish, and sincere Christianity reign in every Member of it.



F I N I S.

BOOKS Printed for John Chandler, at the Cross
Keys in the Poultry.

Several Discourses against Popery, viz.
The Human Doctrines.

The Idolatrous Worship.

The Hypocrisy and Pharisaism.

The Immorality in Practice.

The Persecution and Cruelty.

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